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THERE IS NO DEATH

BY

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THERE IS NO DEATH

By FLORENCE MARRYAT.

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SPIRITUALISM THE GREAT NEED OF THE WORLD.

FROM my earliest and most unthinking days I have always felt that the *one great unfulfilled* want of this world is *undeniable proof* that when we leave it we shall live again, or, rather, that we shall never cease to live. There must be a big screw loose somewhere in the various religions presented to us, which profess to give everything but this—vague hopes, threatening fears, promises of rewards, and dread of punishment—but not *one atom of proof* that, having passed out of this body, we shall exist, either to reap the one or endure the other; and never have I been so thoroughly convinced of what I say as since publishing, now three years ago, the record of my experiences in Spiritualism. Since that book appeared letters have poured in upon me from strangers in every habitable quarter of the globe, and the cry of one and all has been the same: "Show us our dead; give us some sign that they still live, and that we shall live with them!"

Mothers, like Rachel, weeping for their children, and refusing to be comforted because they were not; young men who have studied all the orthodox authors in search of the truth, and found themselves only further from God for their pains; old men and women who at the close of life had nothing tangible to cling to; men of law and literature and science—all these and many others have written to me, or come to see me, in consequence of having read "There Is No Death," and very proud have I been of creating so much curiosity and interest in a subject which is to me a religion.

But if it has made me glad it has also made me sad. Here is a crowd of professedly Christian men and women, who have been under the teaching and guidance of their respective churches since their infancy, coming to a stranger almost as ignorant as themselves to instruct them how to find out *if it is true* that when they pass out of their bodies they shall wake to meet those whom they have loved in this world! Have not then their spiritual

pastors and masters, so called, inculcated this great fact in their minds? They have preached to them on the subject doubtless, but they have had *no proof* to give them that their doctrine was true. They could only rest their belief of an after-life on the traditions that had been handed down to them through the history of the world. A minister will talk to his congregation about heaven and hell, about God's judgments and rewards, about an eternity of misery or blessedness, but pin him to the point to tell you how he knows what he preaches to be true, and he can only hark back to the testimony of the Bible, which, however it may have originated, we all know to be half lost and wholly mistranslated. And though history may be sufficient for us when we are asked to believe that William the Conqueror landed in England in the year 1066, because we really do not care one jot if he ever landed here or not, it is *not* enough to rest all our hopes of a future life upon. The torn and bereaved heart wants proof, *actual, irrefragable proof*, that those who have gone before us live and breathe somewhere; that they are not entirely beyond the limits of our love and remembrance; that the deepest feelings of our hearts have not been wasted, but are bearing fruit still, and even our sorrow for their loss affords a tender pleasure to the spirits who sympathise with us.

The churches have cried long enough, "You must have faith and believe it on our word." The people are beginning to answer, "Give us your proofs and we will believe you. We want something more beyond mere conjecture. The subject is of too much importance to us. If you cannot tell us we will find it out for ourselves." Observe the inaccuracy of the teaching on this subject! The Protestant Church denied for a long time that there *could* be such a thing as the return of those whom we call *dead*, and when it was *forced* by the testimony of men of learning and science to acknowledge it to be a fact, it ascribed the forces by which it was operated as *diabolical!* Perhaps the Protestant Church may remember there was a time when all the powers of Nature, such as thunder and lightning and earthquakes, were attributed to the Devil—anything, in short, which people understood as little as they do Spiritualism.

The Catholic Church shows that spirit intercourse is both possible and true, but diabolical *unless confined to and sanctioned by, the Church herself.* Bernadotte, the little shepherd who saw and spoke to an apparition of the Virgin Mary at Lourdes, was exalted almost to saintship on account of her mediumistic powers. It was miraculous and angelic in *her*, but it would be diabolical and blasphemous in *you* or *me*. Bernadotte was only a rough, ignorant peasant child, no more holy than any urchin from the board school, but she was an excellent physical medium. Did the Church permit her to continue in the world and use her powers for its enlightenment and regeneration? Nothing of the sort. It clapped her at once into a convent to keep them for itself. It declared that her vision was miraculous, that it came from God; but that when I see the apparition of my daughter Florence, who went into the spirit-world as an innocent baby of ten days old, I see a devil sent by the agency of the Evil One to damn my soul to hell! Do you believe such irrelevance? I don't. The priests know better than that, but they have no desire to raise the veil. If they admitted the teachings of Spiritualism and showed the people how to seek counsel and advice of those who are nearer to God than any mortal can be, what further need of their own services? From the very first they have set their faces against it, because it interfered with themselves. The Catholic Church is a mass of Spiritualism; it teems with so-called miracles; the men and women who have witnessed them, or were the mediums for them, have been transformed into saints; but the knowledge must not be disseminated amongst the masses. The reason is obvious—the people would learn too much! They would no longer believe that a man's word could either condemn their souls to hell or give them entrance to heaven; they would begin to use their conscience and their reason—they would, in a word, *be free.*

If we all had indubitable belief in, and conviction of, another life, we should need no churches but these in our own bodies, which the knowledge of our Father's love would transform into temples for the Holy Ghost. To be undoubtedly certain that we shall live again—to know from *the only real proof* we can have (*i.e.*, the

return of the dead) that we shall pass from this life to another far more beautiful, would be to live as in the presence of God and those we love. An universal belief in Spiritualism would do what all the churches in the world and the religions they have carved out for us, have failed to do: it would transform a blaspheming, adulterous, murdering, backbiting, lying and thieving crew into a band of thankful and adoring children, cognisant of their Maker's love and patient of the accidents that may be against them in this world, because assured of passing on to another, acknowledging (which very few do now) that His dispensations in removing their dearest out of their sight for awhile, are all for the best, since they know not only that they will be re-united to them before long, but that even in this world they may be solaced by their presence, and the sense that they still love and wait for them. Why should we grieve so terribly "as those without hope," when we lose our friends by death, and yet hear with comparative composure their departure for another country, like India or Australia, where they will be lost to our sight and hearing and perhaps be exposed to all sorts of dangers from sickness or travelling? Must there not be something at fault in a religion which leaves us a prey to our own surmises and fears, which has no power to make us trustful and confident for our future and for the future of our friends? Would not the belief that they can revisit us and see what we are doing make the survivors somewhat more careful how they behaved, feeling that those they mourn could be grieved still by their misdoings, knowing that we are encompassed by "a mighty cloud of witnesses"?

And still the cry of the children of earth is "Show us our dead." The atheist says, "Prove to me there is a God and I will believe in Him." The careless liver, "Prove that this world does not end all and I may see some good in abandoning my evil life." The mourner, "Let me believe that I shall meet my child, or father, or mother again, and I will be patient and resigned instead of despairing."

Well, then, dear friends, dear fellow-sufferers, for I have suffered as much as any of you, let me try in my poor way to prove it to you; let me show you to the

best of my ability how to set to work to do what *I* have done; how, that is, to open communication with those who have gone before you, that they may be able to convince you that they live, and that you have only to wait a little longer before you will live with them again. That, to that other world, which will seem so natural to you when you enter it, you will carry your own heaven or your own hell, just as you have made it for yourselves whilst here below; that there is no *torture* designed for you or yours by an All-Merciful Father, but only *that* which you prepare for yourselves by the non-exercise of the natural love He gave you for the benefit of your fellow-creatures. The great thing for *you* and *me* and *everyone* is not to believe *this* or *that*, just because it is told to us, but to find out the truth for ourselves. Evidently the churches have not taught it us. If Spiritualism is a truth, why have we been kept in ignorance of it? Why has the fact been denied to us over and over again? By whose authority was it that the ministers of the Established Church but a few years back declared it to be a *ridiculous fable,* whilst now most of them confess it is a truth, and many preach it from the pulpit? Are we infants, that the secrets of Nature are to be kept back from us? Let us have more courage. Let us resolve to inquire into everything and judge for ourselves. If we find Spiritualism does us harm, prevents our doing our duty in this world, saps our health or strength, by all means abandon its pursuit, for it is not for us. But, if it gives us comfort and pleasure—more faith in the goodness of God, and courage to do the work He has appointed us on earth—then cling to it as the greatest solace He has given man. And now let me take you by the hand, as it were, and show you *why I* believe it to be an unmitigated blessing.

THE CURSE OF DEATH?

I should like to speak to you first of death, that change which to most of you is a nightmare of terror, but which in reality should be the gladdest event in all your lives. This unnatural dread of a change as natural as being born is one of the best proofs we have of the little good that has been effected by the religions of the world, of how little influence they have had on

the souls and comprehensions of men, for if they possessed the power to make their proselytes realise *the truth* of their teachings, the expected glories of heaven would have done away with the fear of death, and the terrors of hell with the vices of humanity. But neither one effect nor the other has been the result of nineteen hundred years of preaching and praying.

Why should we fear death? We know that it is inevitable, that it is the *one* thing *only* that *must* happen with absolute certainty to all of us. Our lives are as varied as ourselves. Some of us are born to prosperity, others to misfortune, some to health, others to disease, some to attain the highest honours, or to occupy the proudest positions in this world, others to live and die in obscurity. But sooner or later we must all come to the same end—that end which equalises the king and the pauper—which turns the body of the deceased nobleman into precisely the same dust, no finer nor less objectionable, than that of the last half-starved, diseased cripple who was bundled out of a workhouse cart into the overladen public grave that already held a dozen such as he.

Death is not like the smallpox or the typhoid fever, that we may hope by care or precaution to escape or overcome it. *We must all pass through it.* Yet the majority put the thought away from them as something not to be alluded to—they shudder when they hear it mentioned, *That*, with which, sooner or later, they must all become acquainted is thrust out of sight as if it were their greatest enemy—*that* which their religion teaches them is but the entrance to an eternity of happiness is avoided as if it were indeed the beginning of the typical hell which has been thrust down their throats with no better effect than to make them dread to pass into the presence of their Heavenly Father. If they believe this religion why do they fear death? If they do *not* believe this religion, is it because in their inmost hearts they feel it is not true—that heaven and hell, as they have been represented, are bogeys set up the better to keep us under the thumbs of our pastors and masters, and prevent us enquiring and learning for ourselves? If you read the history of the churches from the beginning you will find that it was so—that the people have ever been exhorted

to place their judgments and consciences into the hands of the ministers, and threatened and terrified into obedience. I except none of the churches. It has been and is the same with all—from the Roman Catholic Church, who arrogates to herself the virtue of infallibility, to the Calvinistic Church, with its horrible doctrine of election by grace, down to the lowest psalm-singing conventicle, whose teacher shrieks hell fire and everlasting burning into the ears of his ignorant congregation. But, thank God, there is a better and more reasonable view of the matter than this, and if Spiritualism served no greater purpose than to dismiss the causeless fear of death, and what comes after it, from the minds of men, it would accomplish *what nothing else before it has done.*

Now, one of the principal objects of Spiritualism is to make this death, which you dread so much, less horrible to you; to prove that it is as natural as living on this earth—that there *is* no death, in fact (in the sense in which we have been taught to regard it), but only a second birth to a second sphere of action. It will show you that you fear too much because you know too little, and that Spiritualism is a light that will make life easier for you to bear and death more welcome.

I do not wish for one moment to depreciate the awful agony of losing our friends by death. That is quite another matter from dreading it on our account. I suppose there is not a person here to-night who has not passed through the bitter experience—not one who has not stood by the dying bed of a father or mother, a husband or wife, a brother or sister—or, worst and cruelest grief of all, a child. For it is only in the course of nature that our parents should pass away before ourselves, and it is an equal chance if brother or sister, husband or wife, should be the first to go! But the children we have brought into the world, the infants we have nourished at our breasts, the youths and maidens we have watched blossom to maturity,—O mothers! I appeal to you, if there is a greater agony under heaven than to see our children die! To watch the hands which we have never failed to assist, stretched out to us for help in vain; to see the dear eyes glazing beneath the inexorable decree; to try and catch the last faint murmured words, to hear the sobbing breath

drawn with greater difficulty at each laboured inspiration, and then, before you have realised that he is near, to know that the so-called Destroyer has come; that all is over, that the warm, living child you have held to you heart night after night—bone of your bone, and flesh of your flesh—is gone for ever; has become a lump of clay without sense or speech or motion, and that, in a few days, however tightly your fond arms may be clasped about it, they will take even *that* away from you and thrust it into the dark, damp earth, and leave it there to become putrid and noisome and revolting. O! that awful burial, when the heavy clods of earth rattle down upon the lid of the coffin that contains your dead darling, as if they would burst it in, and you cry out, as if your feeble remonstrance could arrest the ceremony, and your heart grows faint within you as you realise there is nothing to be done but to submit.

And the sense of desolation that follows. Do you remember what it was to return home, to mark the empty chair, the deserted bed, the familiar possessions left behind, and to feel that the dear arms would never twine around your neck again, that the voice you loved to listen to was silenced for ever and that the eyes you gazed in with delight were closed and dull, that your child had left you, that he was lying in his narrow coffin, under those cruel sods, out in the cold, and the frost, and the rain, and you would neither see nor hear him evermore until you had passed through the dread mystery yourself?

Did you not lie awake at night sobbing instead of sleeping, peering with your inflamed eyes into the impenetrable darkness, yearning for the "touch of a vanished hand and the sound of a voice that is still," feeling that you would give anything, and dare anything, only to hear *one word*, to see *one glimpse* that would convince you that your beloved had not gone utterly beyond the reach of your affection and your tears? Poor mourner! To whom did you go for consolation in your terrible trouble? To your minister? What did he tell you? Doubtless he was very kind, and pitied the grief he had no power to assuage. He talked to you of a shadowy, indistinct, undefinable heaven, situated he knew not where, governed by what

laws he could not tell, subject to what conditions he did not know: a jumbled, misty idea of a city paved with gold, and yet situated above the clouds; a place where new-born infants, if unsprinkled with water by the hand of man, may not enter, but where hoary-headed old sinners and murderers who exclaim with their last frightened breath "I believe!" are gladly welcomed; a place where, God's mercy being illimitable, you may trust and hope your child has found admittance. Did *that* comfort you? Did *that* take away one thought of the dark grave and narrow coffin and the fair face and rounded limbs turning livid with decay? And if your lost darling were not a child; if, on the contrary, he was a thoughtless young man who had never had the opportunity to do much good or much harm in his short life, what did the parson say then? Where did his theories consign the unawakened? Did he not shake his head and keep his lips closed, and leave you more hopeless and despairing than before? And you fell on your knees perhaps, half maddened by his sophistries, and stretched out your empty arms to Heaven, and called on God to say why He had ever created your child, or yourself, only to leave you a prey to such unutterable misery. What would you have said, if, at that supreme moment, you could have heard the voice you believed silenced for ever in this world say "Mother"? If you could have turned your head and seen the dear familiar form standing beside you—not dazzling in its brightness and set apart from you by an angelic radiance, but clothed as it was on earth, looking and speaking as it used to look and speak, only with all the sadness and sickness swept away, with no taint of death or corruption on it, but beaming with life in every limb and feature? Would not such a sight (however short a time it lasted) have done more to dry your tears than all the parson's theories? Would not that single word "Mother" have comforted you more and convinced you of God's goodness more than a thousand sermons would have the power to do, and sent you to your knees again in gratitude that you had been vouchsafed *the only proof that can be infallible* of life beyond the grave? *This* is what I have been privileged to see, what thousands beside myself have

seen, the blessing I long to convince every soul to be *an indisputable fact*, that the dead are *not* gone beyond the reach of those that love them.

Let us look at the matter from a reasonable point of view. When death first entered this world the ground was cursed for a man's sake, and the woman was promised sorrow in her conception. Yet what blessings lay hidden beneath these curses!—blessings which, not for the future alone, followed immediately in their wake. Man was sentenced to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow, but how sweet is the bread thus earned! The rich man whose money is bequeathed to him by his forefathers does not derive half the pleasure from spending it that they did in earning it. What profit we derive from labour! The want of labour is turned into the curse to-day. And the mother who brings forth her child in pain and sorrow, will anyone deny her consolation? It is the childless woman with whom we are called on to sympathise. The mother grows prouder and prouder with each fresh curse the Lord lays upon her. And can you imagine that God would have left death without its remedy even in this world?

SPIRITUALISM THE CURE FOR DEATH.

All things in God's nature combine to produce a beautiful harmony, so that the remedy is never far from the disease; and He has ordained that the dock-leaf, Spiritualism, shall grow beside the stinging nettle, death; the leaf which we can pluck even in this life and lay upon our bleeding hearts—the balm which will heal the aching wound and teach us patience and resignation under our temporal loss, with a certainty of reunion in the world beyond. The dead are *not dead!* They stand in our midst. I, who speak to you, have seen them, conversed with them, and handled them, and I would not part with the knowledge thus gained for all the good this world could give me. I allow that in these days it is not a common experience. Would it were! For centuries spirit communion has been banned by the churches and thrust out of sight as an unclean thing. The church which encourages the State in upholding laws which are totally opposed to the teaching of its professed Master; which smiles

on marriages which are little less than prostitution; on divorce, on capital punishment, on actions at law; which winks at simony and allots enormous revenues for its bishops and archbishops whilst the poor starve —this same church forbids the people to be taught of spirits, who are the first to denounce its practice! But Spiritualism is nothing new. It has been since the world began.

The knowledge that when our friends pass from our sight they are not carried away to an unattainable country whence no communication can take place between us, but are permitted under certain circumstances to revisit this earth and comfort us by the sense of their presence, has been revealed to some of the humblest of the human race, and believed in by many of the highest. You can have no idea until you have enquired into the matter what thousands of people hold this comforting doctrine in England, America, Australia, and the whole world, though few are courageous enough to avow their belief openly. The notion that the dead *cannot* return, that all stories of ghosts or apparitions are invented to scare the superstitious, has been so imbued in their minds that they dread the ridicule that may be cast upon their belief to the contrary. But amongst those who have boldly and openly avowed what they knew to be true there are names on the roll on which the cleverest and most far-seeing amongst us need not be ashamed to inscribe his own. I need only enumerate such men as S. C. Hall, William Crookes, Sir Edwin Arnold, the poet Longfellow, Alfred Wallace, Gerald Massey, Lord Brougham, Lord Lyndhurst, Lord Lytton, Archbishop Whateley, William Howitt, and a hundred others to prove that if Spiritualists err, they err in excellent company.

If you search the writings of the poets and authors of this and every era you will not fail to find traces of the same inward conviction in every one of them. You must all know what Longfellow, the greatest poet and one of the greatest men that America has ever produced, says on the subject—

> *There is no death*, what seems so is transition,
> This life of mortal breath
> Is but a suburb of the life Elysian,
> Whose portals we called death.

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And the Rev. John Keble wrote :—

> For in truth,
> Man's spirit *knows not death*, but sets aside
> The interlinear boundaries of the flesh,
> And in its thoughts, which are its proper self,
> Holds intercourse with those *which are unseen*,
> *As if they were still with us!*

And thus wrote Adam Clarke :—

"I believe that there is a supernatural and spiritual world, in which human spirits, both good and bad, live in a state of consciousness, and I believe that any of these spirits may, according to the order of God in the laws of their place of residence, have intercourse with this world and become visible to men."

And the late Dr. Cumming, one of the most hard-headed and unsentimental men of his time, wrote :—

"*This is certain*, angels descend and minister to the comfort of the suffering—these angels return from their ministry to the choirs of the happy, and can we suppose they will be silent on what they have seen, and to whom they have ministered below?"

I could quote innumerable passages to prove the universality of this belief, but I do not stand before you to generalise, but to give you some practical proof that your dear friends are not gone beyond recall—that they are near you at this very moment, in this hall, bending over you and smiling, "with the proud contempt of spirits risen" (as Mrs. Barrett Browning wrote), at your incredulity.

It was some years after it had become the public talk before the subject of Modern Spiritualism was brought under my notice. I had heard it mentioned, by some people, as a dreadfully wicked thing—diabolical to the last degree; and by others as a most amusing pastime for evening parties, or when one wanted to "get some fun out of the tables." But neither description charmed me, nor tempted me to pursue the occupation. I had already lost too many friends by death. Spiritualism, it seemed to me, must either be humbug or a very solemn thing, and I neither wish to trifle with it nor to be trifled with. And after twenty years' experience I hold the same opinion. I have proved Spiritualism *not to be a humbug*, therefore I regard it in a sacred light, and

consider it should never be approached except in a careful and prayerful spirit. That the phenomena occur is an undeniable fact. The only question amongst outsiders appears to be, *what are they*, and *whence does the power proceed?* If, as many clever men assert, from ourselves, then must those bodies and minds of ours possess faculties hitherto undreamed of, which we have culpably allowed to lie fallow. If our bodies contain magnetic forces sufficient to raise substantial, and apparently living "forms" from the bare earth, which our eyes are clairvoyant enough to see; which "forms" articulate words our ears are clairaudient enough to hear—if in addition to this our minds can read each other's inmost thoughts—can see what is passing at a distance, and foretell accurately what will happen in the future, then are our human powers greater than we have ever imagined, and we ought to do a great deal more with them than we do! But you know that *we cannot do these things*, and the clever people I have alluded to only started the idea because they could give no reasonable solution of the phenomena presented to them. They would not accept the simple truth, and so they had to go out of their way to invent a plausible theory for what they saw and heard.

To discuss Spiritualism from the usual meaning of the word, *i.e.*, as a means of communication with the departed, would make one think that every Christian at least must at once accept the claim as true. They all acknowledge they have spirits independent of their bodies, and that when their bodies perish their spirits will continue to live. Wherein then lies the improbability that these liberated spirits will have the privilege of roaming the universe at will? And if they assert the *impossibility* of their return to earth, they deny the records which form the basis of their religion. The Protestant Church which pins her faith on "the Bible and nothing but the Bible," cannot deny that "the book" reports that spirits of mortal men have re-appeared on earth, and been recognised, as when the graves opened after the crucifixion of Christ, and many of those that were dead went into the city and were seen of many. The Catholic Church does not attempt to deny it. All her legends and

miracles (which are disbelieved in and ridiculed by Protestants) are founded on the same truth; the miraculous or supernatural return, as it is called, of those who are gone. Putting the churches and the Bible, however, on one side, the history of nations proves it to be true. There is not a people on the face of the globe who have not their (so-called) superstitions; hardly a family which has not experienced spontaneous proofs of spirit communion. Where learning and science have thrust all belief out of sight, it is only natural that the man who does not acknowledge a God, nor a hereafter, should not credit the existence of spirits, nor the possibility of communicating with them. But the more rational and natural the mind, the more readily does the truth find credence, and the more stories you will hear to justify belief. Is it not the same with all religion? If I am met at this juncture with the objection that the term Spiritualism has been at times mixed up with so much that is dishonest, as to become an offence, I have no better answer to make, than by turning to the irrefragable testimony of the past and the present, to prove that in all ages and of all religions there have been corrupt and demoralised exponents, whose vices have threatened to pull down the fabric they professed to raise. Christianity itself would have been overthrown before now had its followers been unable to separate its doctrine from its practice.

DIFFERENT PHASES OF MEDIUMSHIP.

Before I proceed further it will be advisable for the benefit of those who may be ignorant of such matters, that I should describe the different phases of mediumship by which we may communicate with those who have gone before. First then, there is the primer of Spiritualism—conversation by means of raps upon or movements of the table, answering to letters of the alphabet. This, which appears at first sight to be tedious, becomes rapid by practice, and develops other forms of mediumship. Many people laugh at this mode of communication with spirits, and call it ridiculous. *Why is it ridiculous?* Put yourself in the position of a disembodied person, who can neither be seen nor heard, nor touched, and what better means

could you devise for making your wishes known? The divining tables of the ancient Egyptians and other learned races were nothing more than what I speak of, yet they did not consider it beneath them to settle the destiny of kingdoms through their means. Remember, if you hear *one tap only* which has not been caused by yourself or your friends you have received as good a proof of the presence of intelligence exterior to your own as if you had seen the spirit standing beside you.

Another phase is when you hear voices in the air, or are touched by spirit hands or faces in the darkness; or have pieces of furniture or other articles moved by invisible means, or perceive flashes of light like meteors or glow-worms moving before your eyes—and all these manifestations are easily obtainable in the home circle. Then there is automatic or direct writing, by which your friends can send you letters, often in their old handwriting, alluding to circumstances perhaps only known to them and yourself. This is sometimes accomplished by means of a writing-medium, and sometimes by merely placing the necessary articles on the table round which you may be sitting in the dark. Then comes trance-mediumship, through which you may hear the very voices of your departed friends reproduced, whilst the medium's features seem to alter to their familiar expression as they speak to you of the days of long ago. Healing powers and powers of prophecy also come through clairvoyance, and are both useful and interesting to sitters. And lastly comes materialisation, which is always the phase most curiously sought after by beginners, though it is by no means the highest or most satisfactory part of Spiritualism. I allude to the power which enables your so-called dead to re-clothe their spiritual bodies. This always appears to be the most wonderful and incomprehensible fact of all to tyros, though in reality it is not a whit more wonderful than the raps upon the table. And I always advise beginners to have some experience of all the other forms of mediumship first, and leave materialisation till they understand a little of the science they are investigating. Naturally, after 20 years of continual enquiry I have passed through all these Spiritualistic experiences, and

have proved them to be undoubted facts. I have scarcely lost a friend—certainly not one who was dear to me—whom I have not seen again. In America alone I held bodily communion during three months with seventeen of my friends and relations who had passed over the borderland, and in England I am speaking to them, and seeing them, and receiving letters from them day by day and week by week. But I have entered so much into detail on this subject in my book, "There Is No Death," that it is impossible for me to do more than allude to it here. But how is it, then, you will perhaps ask me, that everyone does not experience the same privileges? Why do you not receive letters from them, and hear their voices and touch their hands? Have you *ever tried to see them?* Have you expended time, and thought, and money—yes—and self-sacrifice in order to see them? Is it not a fact that though you will spend your money cheerfully on stalls for the theatre, or new dresses, or horses, or any other of your pleasures, you think twice before you will risk your coin in order to obtain some proof of everlasting life?

It took me years of patient research and a large expenditure of money to accomplish what I have done, but it has been worth the whole world put together to me. *Do you wish to see your departed friends?* Is it not a fact that, owing to the wicked and absurd notions with which our minds are imbued regarding death and the spirit-world, many of you who have watched and wept for nights beside the dying bed of some beloved relative, and entreated the Almighty to spare him to you, will shrink with terror from seeing him again as soon as his breath has gone out of his body? Under such circumstances, do you think he would care to make his presence known to you?

A STARTLING EXPERIENCE.

Let me tell you what love and longing—love that casts out all fear—did in the case of a bereaved mother of my acquaintance. She lost her favourite son at sea. The boy had started on his first voyage as a naval cadet, and he never returned, having been washed overboard in a gale. His mother's grief

amounted to insanity. She could neither eat, drink, nor sleep. Every thought was devoted to this child! in imagination she heard his drowning cries—his vain appeals for help—witnessed his dying struggles and his last agony, until her brain threatened to give way beneath the strain. She went from medium to medium in the endeavour to see, or hear of, her boy, but without success. But the mother's love was not to be baffled. She left England, and went abroad to visit the various mediums of whom she had heard. At last her travels brought her to Paris, and whilst there she was told of the arrival of William Eglinton at a certain hotel. Without warning she started to see him, and was shown into his sitting-room, which was brilliantly illuminated by a large chandelier. Mr Eglinton advanced to meet his visitor, and she, grasping both his hands, exclaimed, fervently, "O! Mr. Eglinton, for God's sake help me to find my boy!" As they stood thus holding hands under the chandelier the boy suddenly started up within the circle of their arms. Mr. Eglinton told me that, with all his experience, he had never seen such a thing before, and it considerably alarmed him. But the mother was not alarmed. There stood her child—not bloated and swollen from the cruel waters, nor half eaten by fishes, but fresh and beautiful and smiling, clad in his naval uniform, with his bright curling hair and blue eyes, gazing fondly at his mother until he faded away. I do not say the sight cured her grief at once, but it calmed her excitement and restored her health. She knew her boy lived.

IS SPIRITUALISM WRONG?

But were I, by a thousand facts such as these, to convince you of the possibility of spirit communion, you might still tell me (as others have done) that, even if true, you consider it to be *wrong—wrong* to speak to those whom God gave us for our own! *Wrong* for the husband to speak to his wife, who was one flesh with him; for the mother to speak to the child she brought into the world! This is the most incredible objection to me of all! Say that you don't want to see them again—that you are frightened out of your life at the mere idea of a disembodied spirit; say you

have left off weeping for them—that their place is filled by another—that there are thoughts and feelings and wishes in your heart that you would not care to subject to their investigation; but don't say you consider it wrong. For, if Spiritualism is wrong, God is wrong, and the Christ was wrong, and the Bible must be wrong, and you have nothing to cling to for time or eternity! I'll tell you what *is* wrong! Men and women are wrong! Their passions, their proclivities, their hearts are wrong, and the majority of them leave this world wrong, and come back to it wrong to such as encourage them to do so. If ever you hear a person talk of receiving evil communications through Spiritualism, or of hearing evil actions spoken lightly of by the spirits, you may be sure that man or woman's nature is evil and coarse and sensual, and attracts like to like.

Do you suppose that directly a spirit leaves the body it becomes purified and angelic? How many people pass away from us who are fit to become angels? What becomes of the murderers and thieves —the licentious and cruel—the blasphemous and liars? Do you imagine they do not possess the same facilities. for revisiting earth as the pure-minded and good? But because there is evil, are we to reject the good? Because there are murderers and blasphemers living in this world, shall we cease to hold communion with those we respect and love? The first thing you must learn to believe regarding the disembodied spirits is that their return to this earth *is not supernatural,* but natural. There is no such thing as *super*natural. Their life there is but a continuance of their life here. *Our* spirits are like birds confined in cages. *Their* cage doors have been set open; ours are still closed! but we can hold communion through the bars. The laws for your moral guidance upon earth hold good for you spiritual guidance with regard to those who have left it. You would not hold familiar intercourse with drunkards and thieves whilst here. Don't do it when they have passed over. Remember St. John's injunction, on that subject: "Beloved! believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God."

I have said that if to follow Spiritualism is wrong, then God and the Bible must both be wrong, and I am prepared to support my assertion. Many people, I know, hold a sincere belief in the authenticity of the Scriptures, and found their objection to Spiritualism on the fact that their teachers have taught them that the Bible forbids its practise. Now, I will prove to such, on the word of the Bible itself, that their teachers are wrong—that Spiritualism is not only lawful, but that it is permitted and encouraged by God, and that it is man's increasing wickedness alone that has caused spiritual guidance to be heard of less amongst us. I will prove to you that every phase of it I have mentioned—the direct voice, levitation, trance mediumship, automatic writing, materialisation, clairvoyance, and healing—are all mentioned and approved of in the Bible. The beginning of Spiritualism was when the Lord God (who is the first of all spirits) walked in the cool of the day in the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve, and their eyes (unblinded as yet by carnality and infidelity) were able to see Him and converse with Him. Did it every strike you to question why God came in the *cool of the day?* The cool of the day in the East means darkness. There is no twilight there. As soon as the sun sets it is night. Do you remember that when God created the world darkness moved on the face of the waters; that when Moses desired to see the Lord the answer was, "I will come unto thee in a thick cloud." That in the same book of Exodus it is written, "The thick darkness where God was." These texts and many others like them have been drummed into our ears before we had any minds to understand them, until they have lost all meaning for us, and have to be read by a new light before we can properly comprehend them. Spiritual intercourse was so common in those early days that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were fair, and took them wives of all they chose. Abraham entertained three angels whom he believed to be men, so materialised were they, and they ate and drank with him and rested themselves in his tent. So also did the two angels who came to Lot and dragged him from the

doomed city of Sodom. There are four sorts of mediums mentioned in the Bible, prophets, seers, wise women, and interpreters of dreams. Amongst the latter is Joseph, who was called upon to interpret the dreams of Pharaoh and his chief butler and baker. And when his father Jacob was dying he said unto his sons, "Gather yourselves together that I may tell you what *shall befall* you," which was simply clairvoyance. In Exodus we are told how the Lord taught Moses to be what would be called in these days a conjurer. The burning bush, the rod which became a serpent, the hand that became leprous and then turned back into healthy flesh again, what were these but acts of enchantment. In the first book of Samuel we are given the story of Saul going with his servant to seek the lost asses of his father. They cannot find them, and Saul suggests going home lest his father should be uneasy. His servant replies, "Behold, now, there is in this city *a man of God*, and he is an honourable man, and all that he sayeth *cometh surely to pass*; now, let us go thither, peradventure he can show us the way we should go." Saul hesitates because he has no gift to offer the clairvoyant, but the servant answers, "I have here the fourth part of a shekel of gold, that I will give unto the man of God to tell us our way." So the men of God were not only permitted to tell people what was best to do, but to accept money for their services. Then comes this remarkable verse: "Beforetime in Israel when a man went to *inquire of God* thus he spake, 'Come and let us go to the seer, for he that is now called a prophet was beforetime called a seer.'" Saul's servant took him to Samuel, who revealed his future to him, for it is written, Samuel answered Saul and said, "*I am the seer*, I will tell thee *all that is in thine heart.*" Now here are the very things that the churches to-day call diabolical, and that the law condemns as illegal, practised by "the men of God," whose histories the same authorities declare to have been written by God Himself for our encouragement and example. Is it reasonable? Will it hold water? If you have any brains, or judgment of your own, say for yourself, whether what was *right and honourable* in the time of Samuel can be *wicked and diabolical*

in the sight of God, Who is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." Saul, it is presumable, afterwards became a medium himself, for we read that "an evil spirit *from the Lord* God troubled him." So that even evil spirits may be *from the Lord*, and certainly cannot approach us without His intention.

That materialisation is a fact is proved by the visit of Saul to the woman of Endor to ask her to raise up the spirit of Samuel, when Samuel appeared in the likeness he held on earth, and spoke to Saul of what should happen.

Not only is King Solomon a dreamer and a visionary, but we read of Nathan foretelling the future, of Ahijah doing the same thing, and of the man of God who came out of Judah and stood by Jeroboam by the altar, and when the king tried to lay hold of him his hand was shrivelled up, and then made whole again by his mysterious power. Jeroboam, whose son fell sick, said to his wife, "Arise, I pray thee, and disguise thyself, that thou be not known to be the wife of Jeroboam" [how often people try to disguise themselves when they visit mediums in the nineteenth century] "and get thee to Shiloh: behold, there is Ahijah, the prophet, which told me that I should be king over this people. And take with thee ten loaves, and cracknels, and a cruse of honey, and go to him: he shall tell thee what shall become of the child." She obeyed her husband, and Ahijah told her of Jeroboam's coming doom, and told her that her child would die as her feet recrossed the threshold of her own home; which he did. In the same book we have an account of Elijah's propheciés, of the miracles he performed with the cruse of oil and the barrel of meal for the widow of Zarephath, and the widow said unto Elijah, "*Now, by this I know thou art a man of God.*" Elijah is called a mighty prophet because he opposed his power to that of the priests of Baal, and the fire refused to burn their sacrifices and fell down upon his. The late Mr. Home took, not once, but dozens, perhaps hundreds of times, live fire from the grate and held it in his hands and placed it in those of his friends without their being burned. He even put a living flaming coal amidst the long white hair of dear old Samuel Carter Hall without leaving a

trace of fire or singeing behind, but he was called a humbug for his pains. One of the signs by which Christ declared his followers should be known was the immunity with which they should handle such things. "These signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.' Now, which of the Church dignitaries *who believe*, even the Archbishop of Canterbury, or the Pope of Rome, has ever done such things? Could they take a live coal from the fire with their bare hands and not be burned? And who shall dare, after the text I have quoted to say it was by power of the devil that Mr. Home did these things? Truly, this is a stubborn and stiff-necked generation, which will believe only what it wishes to believe, and would dub Elijah a charlatan. Yes, even the parsons who preach about him would be the first to turn their backs on him, and say he had dealings with the devil, if he re-appeared on earth and again performed his miracles. The people in those days must have kept their private mediums, for in Chronicles we read, "And the Lord spake unto Gad, *David's seer.*" Surely, had it been wrong, God would not have spoken through him. Ezekiel must have been a grand medium, and he speaks of it plainly: "The spirit entered into me and set me on my feet," then "The spirit took me up and I heard a voice. . . Then I came to them of the captivity at Tel-abib, that dwelt by the river of Chebar, and I sat where they sat, and remained there astonished among them seven days." This is a plain instance of levitation, an instance which is multiplied as the history goes on—"Then the spirit entered into me, and set me upon my feet, and spake with me, and said unto me: Go, shut thyself within thine house," which shows that the spirit was a separate entity from Ezekiel.

Passing over a mass of spiritual information in the Bible, we come to Daniel, the holy man whom even lions would not touch. When Belshazzar, the son of Nebuchadnezzar, saw the materialised hand come forth and write upon the wall, and was greatly

troubled thereat, his queen said to him, "There is a man in thy kingdom in whom is the spirit of the holy gods, and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the King Nebuchadnezzar, thy father, made *master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers*; forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and showing hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel . . . now let Daniel be called, and he will show the interpretation." After which follows, the well-known story of Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin, which is perfectly intelligible to anyone acquainted with Spiritualism. There is one part of it, however, which, perhaps, no one but a Spiritualist would notice. When Daniel has told Belshazzar that the warning has been sent to him on account of his not having humbled his heart, he goes on to say, having just mentioned Nebuchadnezzar, "then was the part of the hand sent *from him* and this writing was written." Has anyone before noticed that the hand that wrote the warning *belonged to Nebuchadnezzar*, and consequently he appeared partly materialised to his son? But what would happen to Daniel in the present day if he were brought up by any of the ignorant, bigoted opposers of Spiritualism before a city magistrate? He would get a year's imprisonment at the very least or three months' hard labour without the option of a fine. Does it not seem rather strange in a country that pins its faith on "the Bible and nothing but the Bible"? The witnesses against Spiritualism have actually to *swear upon the very book which proves their accusation to be a lie.* And now comes what seems to me to be the most remarkable proof contained in the Scriptures that spiritual intercourse is

NOT ONLY PERMITTED BUT BLESSED OF GOD.

In the book of Joel, when the Almighty is speaking of the blessings He designs for repentant Zion, he says: "And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; and also

upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit, and I will show wonders in the heavens and the earth." Of course I know that many of my hearers will not accept the Bible as evidence—that they rightly consider it as a very jumbled history, written long after the events spoken of took place, but if the Bible does not contain injunctions against Spiritualism, *what does?* If the only record we possess, which professes to tell us of God's laws, shows Him as permitting His people to practise it, *who* is to say us nay? The priests? Yes, certainly, and for their own purposes. Did they not begin it from the very first? Moses and Aaron had practised all sorts of mediumship before they took over the charge of the Israelites, but as soon as they had to make laws for them they forbade any man or woman to have dealings with familiar spirits. It was only then as it is now. Moses was raised in Egypt, and the Egyptians were from time immemorial famous magicians and necromancers. He was a magician also, but when he became a priest he forbade his followers from imitating him; he wanted to *keep all that sort of thing to Aaron and himself,* that they might appear more wonderful in the eyes of the congregation! Moses with his "familiar spirits," and the Church with its diabolism—can anyone tell me where the difference lies? Both wish to keep the power within the circle of the priesthood—*there* it is the revelation of God, *outside* it becomes dealings with the devil. Is not it very plain? Taught of spirits, we are taught of the God who sends them to us, as Daniel, Joel, and Ezekiel were taught. I know of a parson in the North of England, having charge of a mining district, who says he can make no impression on his parishioners because they are all Spiritualists. These rough miners who spend their lives in temporal darkness are too spiritually enlightened to care to listen to old-world theories.

The Christian world is taught to believe the Bible to be the inspired word of God, and yet the miracles of Jesus and his resurrection after death *had never received any satisfactory explanation* until Spiritualism made them plain. Whoever has seen his or her friend appear after death in a materialised form can

understand the resurrection of Jesus. No one else can. Well was he named Joshua, the Healer. I say it in all reverence, and with no wish to depreciate his extraordinary powers. Why should we be so anxious to ascribe everything he did to a supernatural agency? Had he introduced the telephone, or phonograph, or the electric light, it would have appeared as great a miracle in those days as anything he did. *He constantly denied* that he possessed greater powers than any of his followers might have if gifted with the same faith. The tale of his miraculous birth I pass over in silence. The same, or a very similar account, was written thousands of years before of the birth of Buddha. If it was true of one it may have been of the other, but it has always seemed strange to me that the God who denounced the adultery in His children should have countenanced and ordained such a birth. I would rather try and prove to you that Jesus was a medium, and to show you that what he did has been done since, as he prophesied it should be, by many of his followers. He was a healing medium, "healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people." "And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus *put forth his hand and touched him*, saying, I will, be thou clean! And immediately his leprosy was cleansed."

"And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid and sick of a fever. *And he touched her hand*, and the fever left her." I want to call your attention to the fact that in almost every instance of healing Jesus had *to touch the sick person*, also that he could not practise his healing mediumship without losing some of his vitality or natural power. What did he say when the woman with the issue of blood came behind him in the crowd and touched the hem of his garment? "Somebody *hath touched me*: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me." When he called together his twelve disciples he bestowed upon them *the same power he had himself*. How could they have inherited what belonged to God alone, unless it had been *a natural power* open to the capability of men? "Heal the sick," said Jesus, "cleanse

the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils." No one has ventured to ascribe miraculous powers to the disciples. They were only a set of unlearned men. Jesus had doubtless selected them for their mediumistic powers, which we all possess in a smaller or greater degree, but they could not have performed miracles unless controlled by spiritual agencies. And he foresaw what their mediumship should bring upon them when he added, "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?" Jesus was a *physical medium*. He changed the water into wine. He made five loaves and two fishes feed a multitude. He walked upon the waters. He caused money to be found in the mouth of a fish. He was levitated when he passed out of the disciples' sight. But these powers were not always with him. They depended upon times and conditions, else what is the meaning of the text, "He did not many mighty works there *because of their unbelief*" (or scepticism) and when the disciples asked him why they could not cast out a certain devil he said, "Because *of your unbelief*," which proves that the spiritual powers will not help those who do not believe in them. Jesus was a materialising medium. He raised the apparently dead. A white dove was materialised above his head. The direct voice was heard through his agency. Moses and Elias appeared and talked with him. And on that occasion I want you to observe that *the cloud overshadowed him* before the direct voice was heard. Yet these miracles were subject to external influences. He could not raise the daughter of Jairus until he had put them *all out of the room* (*i.e.*, eliminated all opposing influences).

Did Jesus consider the exercise of mediumship to be wrong? He said, "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward." And again, "The works that I do shall he do also; and *greater works than these shall he do.*" Now, what greater works than his have been done since his time? The disciples' miracles never came up to his. Yet he said positively that they *should be done*. All the men who have lived since then—those who have paid for their faith with their blood, and

those who have been fiendish enough to spill the blood of their fellow-creatures in the attempt to make them adopt their opinions—martyrs and executioners alike, have *never performed one miracle*, yet Jesus said emphatically that they would. And they will be done when we have eliminated our carnality and cultivated our spirituality more—when our teachers go before us, as shepherds before the sheep, and show us how to do it—when they cease to think so much about the loaves and fishes—about the *temporal* advantage and the *temporal* power—and help us to open the doors for the spirits to come in and assist us, then miracles will once more be performed on this earth, and God will walk with man as of old. Can you recall the detailed account of the resurrection of Jesus? First, I would ask you to observe that it took place *by night*. It was the crowning miracle that was to pulverise the unbelieving world, yet it took place *in darkness*, giving the Jews occasion to say that his disciples had come *by night* and stolen his body away. The resurrection would certainly have been more convincing had it taken place in the daytime, and before the eyes of all men. Why did it not? Simply because *it was impossible! Darkness* was necessary for the creation of the world. *Darkness* was necessary for God to come down to speak to Moses. And *darkness* was necessary for the Christ to resurrect his body! But if we urge the necessity of darkness for a materialising seance, we are told it must incontestably be a cover for fraud and chicanery.

Mary Magdalene, who had come *whilst it was yet dark* to the sepulchre, expressly to see Jesus, turned and saw him standing there, and *knew not that it was Jesus*. "Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? She supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, "Mary." She turned herself and said unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, *"Touch me not,* . . . but go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." Now

I ask you to consider for one moment, *why should Mary Magdalene have mistaken him for the gardener?* Jesus was a high-class Jew, and, if contemporaneous history speaks truly, a fair man. Publius Neutulus, in writing of him, says: "His hair is of the colour of a filbert, full ripe, and plain down to his ears, but from him ears downward somewhat curled and more orient of colour, waving about his shoulders; his forehead very smooth and plain; his face, nose, and mouth so framed as nothing can be reprehended; his beard somewhat thick, agreeable to the hair of his head for colour; his eyes grey, clear, and quick." The gardener was, in all probability, a dark-skinned Eastern coolie, one of the lowest types of natives. The "hewers of wood and drawers of water" are to this day selected from the lowest castes. The Jews, too, wore long white-coloured garments reaching to their feet—the gardener probably had only a rag girt about his loins. How could they have resembled each other, unless indeed the gardener served as the medium for his re-appearance? When Jesus spoke to Mary she recognised him—not before—and was probably rushing forward in her delight to catch him by the garment. What were his first words?—"*Touch me not!*" And yet the sceptics complain if they are not allowed to clasp a materialised spirit in their arms! After the death of Jesus he twice passed through closed doors to visit his disciples and appeared on the seashore, when he ate fish and honeycomb with them. He came on two occasions when the disciples were assembled together in an upper room, and it is particularly mentioned that *the doors were shut*, and on these occasions he spoke with them and touched them; after which his followers began to prophesy and to speak with divers tongues, and to send the handkerchiefs off their bodies to the sick and they were healed. *What was that but mediumship?* Do you remember the "mighty rushing wind" that filled all the house on the day of Pentecost when the apostles were inspired? That wind is the unmistakeable sign of a successful seance to this day, whether the Holy Spirit visits the sitters or not.

You will see from the quotations I have given you

that if Spiritualism is diabolism, the practices of the servants of God, both in the Old and New Testament, must have been diabolism also, for the laws of Nature do not change, though centuries intervene, and if it be wrong for you and me to hold communication with the friends who have gone before us, it must have been wrong for them. And since we cannot question the right of what our God does, or sanctions, we may conclude that He allows us the same privileges that He bestowed as *an especial blessing* upon them. One quotation more and I have done. St. Paul says: "There are diversities of gifts. . . To another the gifts of healing; to another working of miracles; to another prophecy; *to another discerning of spirits*; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues; but all these worketh that one and the self-same spirit. Wherefore, brethren, *covet* to prophesy." If we accept the Bible at all, we must accept it as it is written.

If we do not, who is to decide at this distance of time and from the lame translation that is offered us, what is its true meaning, or what is not? Anyway, I hope I have made it plain to you that Spiritualism (whatever the churches may say) was not forbidden or discouraged *of God.*

ADVICE TO ENQUIRERS.

Now, if you will allow the justice of my reasoning you will be ready to ask, "How are such ends to be attained?" "How can we communicate with the friends who have passed over to the other side?" And my answer is, "*Sit at Home!*" If two or three of you are agreed on the subject, and equally anxious to hear from your spirit-friends, sit together *in private with locked doors*, and see if they will not find some means by which to manifest their presence amongst you! It may take patience and perseverance before you succeed, but if it is not worth *that, it is worth nothing at all!* In nine cases out of ten you will succeed, if you do not expect to fly before you can crawl. Most families have a medium in their midst, and it is time to seek professional assistance when you are convinced there is no medium in your private circle. Many people, attracted simply by the novelty

and curiosity of the idea, make up circles without having learned the A B C of Spiritualism, and then are disappointed because tremendous results do not immediately follow their efforts. Remember what I have said—that Spiritualism is a natural thing, and subject to natural laws. You would not expect a flower to grow unless you had first planted the seed, nor could you hope to read Greek until you had mastered the difficulties of Alpha, Beta, and Gamma. First, then, I advise you to read *all you can upon the subject*, including the Bible, that you may be prepared to confute the arguments of your non-Spiritualistic friends. There are many works published on this marvellous subject, by such writers as Wallace, Crookes, S. C. Hall, Britten, Farmer, Dale Owen, Tuttle, Peebles, Epes Sargent, Andrew Jackson Davis, and numerous others, which are unimpeachable in their testimony to the truth. There are several newspapers also from which students may derive much help—in England, "The Two Worlds" and "Light"; in America, "The Banner of Light," and "The Progressive Thinker"; in Australia, "The Harbinger of Light"; in Paris, "Le Spiritisme," and others. Having learned all you can from the experience of others *sit at home!* If, after a while you find it necessary to have help, engage a reliable medium to sit with you *at your own house*. Don't go to public seances until you are assured of the truth of Spiritualism. They have done more to retard the cause than anything else. Not because they are not genuine, but the mere fact of a crowd of sitters of all sorts and conditions assembled together, precludes the possibility of obtaining the best manifestations. If you choose to visit public seances from motives of curiosity, that is another thing; but do not go thinking to find your lost friends there, and then, on being disappointed, declare that Spiritualism is all a fraud.

There is a family now living in London who enjoy the purest type of Spiritualistic communion that I have ever come across. It consists of a tradesman and his sons and daughters—the mother and several children having just passed on to the Summerland—that employ no public medium, and they talk little of

their experiences to the outside world. But one evening in every week they sit for communion with their relatives, and their success is simply perfect. I heard of it and was anxious to witness it for myself, and my wish having been made known to the father of the family he kindly invited me to be present at one of their seances. We sat in the front room, which was lighted by an oil lamp; the back room, which was divided by white lace curtains only, forming the cabinet. In a few minutes two little spirit children, of about three or four years old, ran into our midst, and were rapturously welcomed by their brothers and sisters. Their father told them to come and speak to me, which they did, resting their little hands on my knees the while. Then an elder brother and a young friend of his appeared, and lastly the mother glided in and took a seat by her husband and laid her hand on his. There were a piano and an organ in the further room, and, after greeting the sitters, the two young spirit-men returned there and played a duet on the two instruments—a violin and a flute played by invisible hands joining in perfect harmony, while the sitters united in singing a hymn. I thought it then, and I think it still, the most perfect specimen of what a seance should be! It entirely illustrates Longfellow's lines—

Then the forms of the departed enter at the open door,
The beloved—the true-hearted, come to visit us once more.

MENTAL CONDITIONS FAVOURABLE TO SUCCESS.

One word on the spirit in which you should approach the investigation of a mystery which may change the whole course of your future life. Don't be sceptical and don't be too easy of belief. Remember that Spiritualism is undoubtedly true, and remember also that it may be imitated. There are two classes of people who have done more harm to Spiritualism than the testimony of all the scientists has done good. These are the enthusiasts and the sceptics. The first swallow everything, and the second will swallow nothing! The enthusiasts are generally persons of weak intellect and credulous dispositions, who bow down before the spirits who commune with them as if they were so many little gods descended from

heaven, instead of beings like themselves, though unclothed with mortal flesh.

What Spiritualist has not sat at a seance where such people have made themselves a laughing stock for the whole company? Yet to allow the deeds and words of fools to affect one's inward conviction of a matter would be tantamount to giving up the pursuit of everything in which one's fellow-creatures can take a part. So let me pray you, whilst you believe, not to believe *too much!* The second class to which I have alluded, the sceptics, have not done so much harm to Spiritualism as the enthusiasts, because, as a rule, they are so bigoted and narrow-minded that they overdo their protestations and render them harmless. The sceptic refuses to believe *anything* because he has found *one thing* to be a fraud. If *he* gains no satisfactory evidence of the presence of the departed, *no one* has ever gained such a test. Now such reasoning is neither just nor logical. Again, a sceptic fully expects *his* testimony to be accepted and believed, yet he refuses to credit the testimony of another person. And if he is told that, given certain conditions, he can see this, or hear that, he replies, "No! I will see it and hear it without *any* conditions or I will proclaim it all a fraud."

WHAT IS THE GOOD OF IT?

But, granted that spirits can appear to us, that they always have appeared from the beginning of the world, and that they will continue to do so, long after your spirit and mine have joined the great majority, you may still ask me what *good* do they do? To me it seems as if the good were illimitable, and reached up even to the throne of God! What good is it, in an age of free thought, scepticism, and general disbelief in the hereafter, to have one's faith in immortality confirmed? When I look around me and see the young men and women nowadays who believe in *nothing*, who lie down and die like the dumb animals who cannot be made to understand the love of the dear God who created them, I cannot conceive anything more calculated to do them good than the return from the spirit-land of a father, or mother or friend, who might convince them by ocular demonstration that

there is a life beyond of happiness or misery, according to the life we lead below. Some of you may *think* you believe it, but you do not realise it! Death, instead of being the portal of the life elysian, the gate of which may swing open for you at any moment, is a far-off misty and horrible phantom, the approach of which you dread and the sight of which in others you run away from! Spiritualists do not fear death! Christians may *hope* and *trust*, but Spiritualists *know*! There is the difference between their faith and that of a non-Spiritualist that there is between the knowledge of a man who has visited Australia, and that of one who has only traced the country on the map. We have visited the border-land—we have left earth for a little space, and entered that sphere where our dear ones live, and whence they come at times to tell us how they fare, and bid us be of good cheer until the happy day of meeting comes. And if you wish to lose all fear of death, and to be assured of your future life, I say to you, "Go and do likewise!" Don't let this world, with its business and its pleasure, engross all your thoughts. Dedicate a few to those who have gone before. Cultivate the Spirituality which is in you—the Spirituality which Christ was set upon this earth to teach men to discover *in themselves*. Do not close your ears to the voices of your spirit-guides—live as though they heard and saw you, as indeed they do—and if my words this evening have convinced you that Spiritualism is both true and right, may you all live to thank God for the light which it will cast upon your life here and your life beyond, and to say with me, "There is *no Death*."

[The foregoing lecture is reprinted from the THE TWO WORLDS, with the permission of the author. We commend the arguments to the thoughtful consideration of every reader, especially those who accept the Bible as a divine revelation. Taking it as it stands, Miss Marryat has built up her case upon the testimony of the records themselves, and there is no logical escape from her conclusions, save by impeaching the accuracy of her interpretation of the nature of the phenomena, and the meaning of the words employed. Spiritualists claim the right of private judgment, and contend that the phenomena of to-day are identical in nature with those recorded in the Scriptures, and that it is pure assumption to call ours secular and theirs sacred.—ED. *T. W.*]

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